Export of Agricultural Product from West Bengal

6265. SHRI RATNA BAHADUR RAI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the agricultural products exported from West Bengal to other countries;

(b) the quantum of such exported products during the last three years; and

(c) the amount of foreign exchange earned by West Bengal for the country within this period?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Jute, large cardamom, tea, rice, vegetables, flowers, marine products, etc., are major agricultural commodities exported from West Bengal.

Details of state-wise exports are not maintained.

India's share in World Export Trade in Agricultural Products

6266. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) India's percentage of share in world export trade in agricultural products at present and as compared with the percentage of last three years;

(b) whether it is a fact that the total volume of farm exports is still very low and there is over dependence on a few commmodities; if so, details thereof; and

(c) the steps Government have taken or propose to take to boost farm exports?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) India's share of export of agro-based commodities is less than 1 per cent of the world trade. Commodity-wise details of India's share in the world trade, in so far as they are available, are contained in Table No. 7.5 (pages S-95 to S-97) of the Economic Survey of the Government of India for 1993-94, copies of which are available in Parliament Library.

(b) Yes, Sir. The major reasons being low productivity and high price of raw materials; inadequate processing facilities, poor capital investment and high rate of interest; heavy post-harvest losses due to inadequate and unscientific post-harvest management practices; and lack of concentrated production facilities for export quality production near exit points.

(c) Some of the specific steps taken to promote farm exports are :—

(1) Lowering of import duties on certain inputs and materials required by the agricultural sector;

(2) Bringing the sector under the purview of the schemes of Export Oriented Units (EOUs) and Export Processing Zones (EPZs) and allowing agriculture based EOUs the benefit of 50 per cent of turnover to be sold in the domestic market as against the 25 per cent norm generally fixed.

(3) More aggressive overseas publicity and sponsoring of trade delegations, arranging of buyer-seller meets and arranging of inter-action with importers.

Potential for Agricultural and Horticultural Exports

6267. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the potential for agricultural and horticultural exports of the country during the coming years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the countries identified for the export;

(d) whether there are any hurdles in these exports, if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps being taken to remove those hurdles?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Agricultural commodities cover a wide spectrum of items like oilcakes, rice, tea, coffee, cotton, spices, cashew, tobacco, fruits and vegetables, meat and meat products, etc. These are in demand in varying degrees in different countries. Europe, USA and West Asia are the major markets for India's agricultural commodities.

The export projections for agro-exports at the end of the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97) is Rs. 12,064 crores at 1991-92 prices.

(d) and (e) Lack of infrastructural facilities (like air cargo facilities not keeping pace, inadequate shipping facilities), high air freight rates and lack of vapour treatment facilities are the major hurdles in fully exploiting the potential for exports of agricultural commodities. A programme has been drawn up for upgrading the infrastructural facilities during the Eighth Plan period, to be implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture. On the export of fresh fruits, air freight subsidy was also made available on a selective basis during 1993-94.

Countries Importing Sports Goods from India

6268. SHRI T. A. MOHAMMED SAQHY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of major countries importing Sports Goods from India alongwith name and value of sports items mainly imported by them during the last three years;

(b) whether dwindling export of traditional items like footballs etc. from India which was at its peak during the decades from 1970 to 1980 has again lately started picking up and if so, details thereof;

(c) what varieties of leather are being used in manufacturing footballs for export and which of these varieties are most popular in International Market;

(d) whether Government propose to further strengthen Sports Goods Export Promotion Council for boosting exports of this labour intensive industry and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor ; and

(e) whether Government propose to ask the Council to drop its precondition of a minimum domestic sale of Rs. 20,000/- or export sale worth Rs. 50,000/- to encourage new exporters?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Major sports goods importing countries from India are UK, Australia, Germany, France, Holland and New Zealand. Itemwise, countrywise imports of sports goods by these countries during the last three years is attached at Statement I. (*See* below).

(b) Yes Sir. Export of traditional items like footballs etc. has been showing consistant growth over the last 5 years. A detail are at statement II. (*See* below).

(c) Polyurthane (PU), leather, natural leather are being used for the manufacture of footballs. PU leather is the most popular variety in the international market.

(d) The Sports Goods Export Promotion Council is a guarantee institution under this Ministry. Grants are given from the MDA for publicity, participating in fair/exhibitions abroad etc. The Government is also helping the industry in importing raw material for the sports goods industry through the Government agencies like STC.

(e) No, Sir. No such proposal is under consideration of the Government.